

## 9.0 SAFETY ELEMENT

### 9.1 INTRODUCTION

The Safety Element identifies and evaluates natural and urban safety hazards in Los Gatos whether existing or potential. It establishes policies and implementation strategies to reduce or abate these hazards to protect residents of and visitors to the Town. Additionally, this element guides the Town when participating in resolving safety issues that are regional in character, or otherwise beyond the immediate control of the Town. The safety concerns identified in this element have been divided into the following categories:

- ☐ Geologic and Seismic Hazards;
- ☐ Urban and Wildland Fire Hazards;
- ☐ Flood and Inundation Hazards;
- ☐ Crime and Traffic;
- ☐ Hazardous Materials Management; and
- ☐ Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery.

### 9.2 GOALS, POLICIES, IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

#### ISSUE: 1

The Town of Los Gatos is part of the San Francisco Bay Area, which is recognized as one of the most active seismic regions in the United States. Based on historic records, even though the Town was seriously affected by the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, it is likely that during the next 50 years, the Town will again be affected by at least one earthquake of a Richter magnitude 6.0 or greater, and by numerous earthquakes of lesser magnitude. The configuration of soils and geologic structure underlying the Town are indicative of a variety of seismic related geological hazards. (See Technical Appendix). As seen in the 1989 earthquake, a major earthquake with an epicenter location close to the Town will cause structural damage to buildings, roadways, and utilities and possibly cause serious earth slides in the hills. In addition to seismic hazards some areas of Los Gatos may be subject to other geologic hazards such as slope instability, expansive soils, or subsidence.

#### Goal:

- S.G.1.1 To reduce the potential for injuries, damage to property, economic and social displacement, and loss of life resulting from earthquakes, and other various forms of geologic failures including mud flows and landslides.
- S.G.1.2 To minimum exposure to geologic hazards, including slope instability, subsidence, and expansive soils, and to seismic hazards including groundshaking, fault rupture, liquefaction and landsliding.

#### Policies:

- S.P.1.1 Ensure that reliable evaluations are made of the geologic conditions existing at all sites proposed for development, especially where conditions indicate the possibility of weak supporting soils or geologic structures.

- S.P.1.2 Restrict new development and redevelopment based on the levels of acceptable risk and potential severity of hazards.
- S.P.1.3 Preserve as open space that property which is unbuildable due to geologic conditions.
- S.P.1.4 Buildings and structures required for emergency services shall have sufficient resistance to withstand a major earthquake.
- S.P.1.5 Provide incentives for seismic retrofits of structures.

**Implementing Strategies:**

- S.I.1.1 Geologic reports: Require geological investigations for any development or project when warranted.

Time Frame: On-going  
Responsible Party: Building, Engineering and Deciding Body

- S.I.1.2 Geologic map: The Town shall update periodically its geological map delineating known geological hazards and faults in the Town.

Time Frame: 2000 - 2005  
Responsible Party: Building and Engineering

- S.I.1.3 Bridges: The Town shall continue to identify and retest, if needed, those bridges whose destruction would cause serious access problems after an earthquake.

Time Frame: 2000 - 2005  
Responsible Party: Engineering and Public Works

- S.I.1.4 Essential buildings: The Town shall continue to evaluate and maintain buildings in Town whose use and function are essential in response to a major earthquake.

Time Frame: 2000 - 2005  
Responsible Party: Building, Engineering and Police

- S.I.1.5 Geologic Hazards Check List: As part of development review, the developer shall fill out the Geologic Hazards Check List as adopted by the Town and show that proposed structures including earth fills will resist potential earthquake effects.

Time Frame: On-going  
Responsible Party: Building and Engineering

- S.I.1.6 Require preparation of a report from an engineering geologist that reviews geologic soils and engineering reports for developments in identified geologic hazard areas.

Time Frame: On-going  
Responsible Party: Building and Engineering

- S.I.1.7 Enforce Uniform Building Code seismic safety restrictions.

Time Frame: On-going  
Responsible Party: Building

## **ISSUE: 2**

The Santa Clara County Fire District provides fire protection to most of the Town of Los Gatos. Policies need to be in place in order to protect Town residents and property from injury and damage resulting from fire hazards. In addition, San Jose Fire Department and the California Department of Forestry cover areas within the Town and its sphere of influence. Los Gatos is susceptible to destruction from both urban and wild land fires.

### **Goal:**

- S.G.2.1 To incorporate fire safety precautions as an integral consideration in planning development.
- S.G.2.2 To reduce the potential for injuries, damage to property, economic and social displacement, and loss of life resulting from fire hazards.

### **Policies:**

- S.P.2.1 Minimize exposure to wildland and urban fire hazards through rapid emergency response, proactive code enforcement, public education programs, use of modern fire prevention measures, quick safe access for emergency equipment and evacuation, and emergency management preparation.
- S.P.2.2 Ensure emergency fire and medical services are available and ensure adequate water supply for fire emergencies.
- S.P.2.3 Design and site new development located in or adjacent to fire hazard areas to minimize hazards to life and property, such as fire preventive site design, access, landscaping and building materials, and use of fire suppression techniques.
- S.P.2.4 Restrict development in areas with inadequate water flow.
- S.P.2.5 Encourage neighborhood fire emergency planning for isolated areas.
- S.P.2.6 Encourage fire safety improvements for existing homes and commercial building.

### **Implementing Strategies:**

- S.I.2.1 Neighborhood safety plan: Adopt procedures whereby the public will continually be made aware of the Town's policies regarding safety hazards and be conveniently supplied with information to include notification of residents of fire emergency plans for their area.

Time Frame: 2000 - 2005  
Responsible Party: Fire and Police

- S.I.2.2 Site design: In areas identified as potentially susceptible to fire hazards, require special building and site design by ordinance.

Time Frame: On-going  
Responsible Party: Building, Fire, Police and Engineering

## *Flood and Inundation Hazards*

S.I.2.3 Vegetation: Control excessive buildup of flammable vegetative material.

Time Frame: On-going

Responsible Party: Fire

S.I.2.4 Water storage: During the development review process, carefully consider the adequacy of water storage for fire protection.

Time Frame: On-going

Responsible Party: Fire, Building and Engineering

S.I.2.5 Identify the characteristics of the total water supply available in the event of an emergency.

### **ISSUE: 3**

This section of the Safety Element addresses issues regarding flood hazards. A Storm Drain Master Plan has been prepared for the Town of Los Gatos. The Plan establishes drainage design criteria to establish the baseline requirements. This will ensure that the required level of protection is provided which will meet various jurisdictional agency requirements in the Town of Los Gatos.

#### **Goal:**

S.G.3.1 To reduce the potential for injuries, damage to property, economic and social displacement, and loss of life resulting from flood hazards.

#### **Policies:**

S.P.3.1 Limit the intensity of land use in flood plain areas.

S.P.3.2 Require site planning and building design to address identified flood and inundation hazards.

S.P.3.3 Insure federal standards are met for development in designated flood plains along Los Gatos Creek and other creeks in the Planning Area.

S.P.3.4 To promote water conservation and the efficient use of water.

#### **Implementing Strategies:**

S.I.3.1 The Town shall develop a list of priorities for improvements to the storm drain system based upon the Storm Drain Master Plan.

Time Frame: 2001 - 2002

Responsible Party: Engineering

S.I.3.2 The Town shall study potential impacts associated with failure of dam facilities and shall develop and maintain emergency response plans in the event of such failures.

Time Frame: 2001 - 2002

Responsible Party: Engineering

#### **ISSUE: 4**

Police protection for the Town of Los Gatos is provided by the Los Gatos/Monte Sereno Police Department. The Town is characterized as a relatively safe, quiet community with few crime or traffic related hazards. This section of the Safety Element further addresses these issues.

##### **Goal:**

- S.G.4.1 To reduce the potential for injuries, damage to property, economic and social displacement, and loss of life resulting from crime and traffic hazards.

##### **Policies:**

- S.P.4.1 Pursue community policing and other crime prevention measures for increased public safety.
- S.P.4.2 Ensure traffic safety.
- S.P.4.3 Street standards shall recognize the existing character of the neighborhood safety and maintenance.

##### **Implementing Strategies:**

- S.I.4.1 Crime prevention by design: Adopt an ordinance that establishes design parameters for buildings, streetscapes and lighting which help prevent crime.

Time Frame: 2001 - 2005

Responsible Party: Police

- S.I.4.2 Uses adjacent to schools: Prohibit new commercial or industrial zoning adjacent to elementary school sites. (This does not limit the use of the - ps - Public School Overlay Zone.)

Time Frame: On-going

Responsible Party: Planning and Town Council

#### **ISSUE: 5**

The Santa Clara County Fire District issues Hazardous Materials Permits to all businesses handling such materials in the Town. While these permits help track hazardous materials use in the Town, this element of the General Plan addresses broader issues related to hazards associated with hazardous materials.

##### **Goal:**

- S.G.5.1 To reduce the potential for injuries, damage to property, economic and social displacement, and loss of life resulting from hazards related to hazardous materials.

##### **Policies:**

- S.P.5.1 Work with public agencies and private organizations to prevent introduction of hazardous materials into the water and air supply.

*Disaster  
Preparedness and  
Response*

**Implementing Strategies:**

S.I.5.1 Identify businesses within the Planning Area using hazardous materials.

Time Frame: On-going

Responsible Party: Fire

S.I.5.2 Maintain an inventory of all businesses that store or use hazardous materials.

Time Frame: On-going

Responsible Party: Fire

S.I.5.3 Maintain vigilance in monitoring the storage of hazardous materials.

Time Frame: On-going

Responsible Party: Fire

**ISSUE: 6**

All communities must prepare for unexpected disasters. This section of the Safety Element establishes policies which will aid the Town preparing for, responding to, and recovering from such unexpected events.

**Goal:**

S.G.6.1 To reduce the potential for injuries, damage to property, economic and social displacement, and loss of life resulting from unexpected emergency scenarios.

**Policies:**

S.P.6.1 Require and maintain effective circulation in hillsides in accordance with the Hillside Specific Plan.

S.P.6.2 Discourage single access roads of extended length, and restrict development along such roads.

S.P.6.3 Maintain up-to-date preparedness and response plans for fire, flood, earthquake, hazardous materials, and other emergencies.

**Implementing Strategies:**

S.I.6.1 Steep roads: Establish specific gradient standards and the maximum length of steep roads.

Time Frame: 2000 - 2005

Responsible Party: Engineering, Police and Fire

S.I.6.2 Road grades: Reduce the permitted gradient in areas determined to be of high risk landslide or fault zones.

Time Frame: On-going

Responsible Party: Engineering, Police and Fire

- S.I.6.3 Street Signs: Adopt specific design criteria for street identification signs including street names and numbers in rural areas and change existing signs to comply.
- Time Frame: 2000 - 2005  
Responsible Party: Engineering and Public Works
- S.I.6.4 Neighborhood disaster plans: Provide an outline for encouragement of disaster preparedness for neighborhoods.
- Time Frame: 2000 - 2005  
Responsible Party: Police, Fire and Building
- S.I.6.5 Include the Town's emergency plan in this General Plan by reference.
- Time Frame: On-going  
Responsible Party: Planning
- S.I.6.6 Emergency road design: Design road systems to provide reliable access to remote areas both for access by emergency vehicles and egress by residents fleeing from a disaster.
- Time Frame: On-going  
Responsible Party: Police, Fire and Engineering
- S.I.6.7 Regularly update and distribute the Town's Emergency Management Plan.
- Time Frame: On-going  
Responsible Party: Police
- S.I.6.8 Earthquake Preparedness: Update the Town's earthquake preparedness information packet originally developed in the mid 1980's, keep it current on an ongoing basis, and develop and implement effective means to disseminate it to Town residents and businesses.
- Time Frame: 2001 - 2003 and On-going  
Responsible Party: Community Services, Police and Fire